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FM AMEMBASSY BRATISLAVA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 1278
INFO RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE
RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS BRATISLAVA 000579

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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [LO](#)

SUBJECT: SLOVAKIA SUPPORTS DEMOCRACY IN BURMA THROUGH EU
AND UN, NOT BILATERAL AID

REF: SECSTATE 142626

¶1. In response to reftel, Drahomir Stos, MFA Director of the Asia and Oceania division, confirmed to Poloff that Slovakia does not have any development assistance programs in Burma and does not plan to open programs in Burma in upcoming years. Stos emphasized that Slovakia will continue to support multiple UN and EU initiatives to apply pressure to the Burmese regime, and would be glad to actively participate in delegations to Burma as part of its duties within international organizations.

¶2. Stos acknowledged that the request to consider providing democracy promotion assistance in Burma comes at an especially bad time, when Slovak Aid (Slovakia's development assistance agency) is in the process of reducing program funds available for democratic assistance in neighboring countries in favor of infrastructure projects. In late September, Slovak Aid approved 2008 projects for Serbia, which is Slovakia's largest recipient of development assistance. None of the 17 approved projects focused on democracy promotion, local governance, education, or civil society building, even though several such proposals were submitted. During the 2004-2007 period, in contrast, 24 of 59 projects focused on one of those categories. (Comment: Post continues to actively engage MFA, key politicians, and the NGO community in order to convince the GOS to raise its overall development assistance levels and to maintain or increase commitments to democratic assistance projects. To emphasize our commitment, Public Affairs will provide complementary funds next year for Slovak Aid democracy promotion and civil society building projects in priority countries. MFA says it intends to ask for significantly greater funding for Slovak Aid from the central budget next year. End Comment.)

VALLEE